

Office of Governor Pat Quinn

2011 Environmental Heroes

Beye Elementary School is proud to belong to the "zero waste district" of Oak Park District 97 where all 8 of its elementary schools are implementing some form of zero waste. The elementary schools have collectively saved the district more than \$26,000 to date. Beye School, led by a green team of parent volunteers and strongly supported by its principal and staff -- has been the grateful recipient of two \$10,000 IL DCEO zero waste grant awards, and is on its 3rd year of zero waste initiatives, including an all-school composting system, ongoing maximization of recycling efforts, and continual sustainability education and awareness programming. Since starting in 2008, Beye has diverted more than 2,200 lbs of compostable food waste and more than 4,000 lbs of liquids from the landfill. This award was accepted by Ana Garcia Doyle.

Keith Bolin is a parent and school board member of the Bureau Valley School District. Since 2005, Keith, has saved his school district \$80,000+ per year by spearheading the installation of the first industrial-sized wind generator at an Illinois school. In addition to helping power the school district with renewable energy, Keith helped create a Fresh Food Committee made up of 29 national, state, county, and local community organizations and agencies to plan and implement a district-wide Farm to School program. The goal of this program is to increase food security and improve child health by offering healthy food choices and supporting an increase in physical activity.

Carlos DeJesus is the Assistant Principal at Pedro Albizu Campus High School in Humboldt Park. Carlos has been instrumental in community building through Urban Agriculture and Social Ecology. He also has played a prominent role in integrating all the school's science curriculum through the lens of urban agriculture. He has taken on the food deserts in his neighborhood and has raised awareness about obesity by growing food on the rooftop of the school.

Jane Healy is a parent and school board member of the Blue Island School District. She wanted to give her kids the experience and health benefits that come with walking to school. So every day, she put on her walking shoes and took her kids to school. She created a program called "Walkable School Bus." After nearly two and a half years, there were so many people walking to school that the program shifted to riding bikes with her children to school and formed a "Bike Train."

Patricia Jonikatis provides a prime example of excellence by consistently garnering environmental enthusiasm from her students both in and out of the classroom at Kellogg Elementary School. For the past four years, Pat has run an afterschool Environmental Club with the support of the Chicago Conservation Corps (C3). Through the efforts of Pat and her students, the school has: improved their recycling efforts, composted with worms; started and maintained a beautiful, productive garden; and increased energy conservation efforts through a year-long grant.

Mclean County Unit #5, retrofitted 8 elementary schools with geothermal systems that have shown a 50% reduction in utility costs. Mclean County has also built 3 new schools that have geothermal systems which have saved the district thousands of dollars on energy costs. The award was accepted by Jeff Monahan.

Rockford Public Schools, District 205's FarmTown was established to provide an experiential learning experience for middle and high school students. The district designed the project to incorporate agriculture/gardening, nutrition, and economics in a real world laboratory by developing land into a garden project. Rockford Public Schools partnered with the Rockford Park District and the University of Illinois Extension to bring FarmTown to fruition. This award was accepted by Dr. Travis Woulfe.

Mary Beth Schaye and **Lisa Deacon** single-handedly began composting efforts at Dewey Elementary School. Since the beginning of the school year (2010-2011), they have offered composting at: the Pancake Breakfast, Classroom Halloween parties, Pizza Night/Cakewalk, 3rd grade Thanksgiving Feast, Classroom Winter Holiday parties, Winter Fest, Classroom Valentine's Day Parties, Books & Breakfast sessions. They have recently begun composting efforts during every lunchroom period. Mary Beth and Lisa have gotten the kids involved by having them compost their lunches while also raising awareness among the community. Their efforts at Dewey School saved more than 125 gallons of material from the ending up in a landfill.

Lucille Shaw has been a master teacher at the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences since 1987, helping thousands of students become acquainted with the multifaceted business of food. Lucille has spent a lifetime introducing students to career pathways that involve farming, research, and finance. She was a FFA Master Teacher and is currently the Assistant Principal of the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences.